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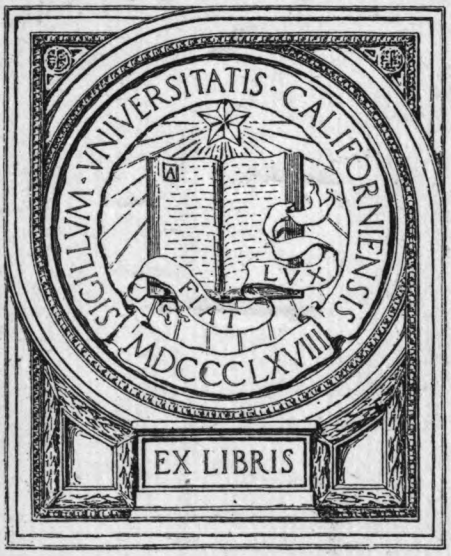

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CAUSATION

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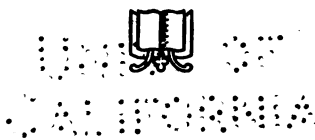

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CAUSATION

Spiritual causation is the one question to be considered, for more than all others spiritual causation relates to human progress.—Science and Health, by Mrs. Eddy, p. 170.

THE question of causation has been, for centuries, the riddle of the universe. The human mind has traveled, like Oedipus, over the sands of time, demanding with insistence, "What is life?" The globe, said an ancient people, rested on the howdah of an elephant, the elephant stood upon a tortoise—and then? With greater definiteness Mrs. Shelley explained how man was made in Frankenstein. The one solution is about as valuable as the other. Yet the explanation has existed all the time, for those with eyes to see, in the pages of the Bible. Even now that it has been given to it, the world claps its telescope to its blind eye, with the determination of Nelson, and declares, with all his vehemence, that it is unable to see the signal.

PHILOSOPHIC MATERIALISM AND IDEALISM

It has been said that every man, whether he knows it or not, is either a materialist or an idealist. Certainly human thought, in one channel

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or the other, has rolled down the hill of speculation into the ocean of doubt, throughout all the ages. The materialist, roughly speaking, insists that nothing exists but matter and the forces inherent in it. He accounts for its indestructibility by means of some one of his atomic theories, the proof of which he recognizes in the balanced action of chemical activity or the conservation of energy, and practically sums up life in the famous couplet of the Persian poet:

> What, without asking, hither hurried whence?
> And, without asking, whither hurried hence?

The idealist, on the other hand, declares that all that exists is mind or energy, and that matter, being nothing but a phenomenon, is necessarily unreal. He does not, it is true, say that the phenomenon is eternal. He may agree with Sir William Crookes that its disappearance in "the formless mist," out of which it originally emerged, is a possibility, but inasmuch as he insists on the reality of the noumenon, the phenomenon becomes, to all intents and purposes, so real that the difference of opinion between the two schools degenerates into something perilously near Demosthenes' story of the quarrel over the ass's shadow. So apparent was this to Huxley that he declared that, for his part, he was unable to see any difference between the two, whilst Berkeley himself gave practical expression to the

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same contention when, in the words of Mr. Balfour, he elevated tar water, the humblest drug in the pharmacopœia, to the altitude of a universal panacea. It is perfectly certain that if, as Huxley insisted, the idealistic theory is the more reasonable, the materialistic practice is the more logical.

THEOLOGICAL IDEALISM

This, of course, is to consider the matter quite apart from religion. The time, however, comes when as the appreciation of a First Cause becomes more clearly defined, the spiritual instinct asserts itself determinedly. The statement that no man is entirely devoid of spiritual perception has become almost banal through repetition. This is probably the case, whether God is defined simply as nature, or as a person, or, in the words of Jesus, by the well of Sychar, as Spirit. To the materialist, admitting no reality but matter and its inherent forces, the First Cause or, if you choose so to conceive it, God, is physical nature. This theory is a perfectly simple and intelligible expression of pantheism, but it entails the admission that all the horrors of nature are part of the divine economy, and that the universe is simply "the fair show" which veils

> one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
> of mutual murder, from the worm to man.

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No wonder Huxley wrote that, so far from the materialistic theory clearing up the mysteries of existence, it left them precisely where they were.

The attempt to escape from this by means of idealism, in the end, scarcely improves matters very much. To the idealist, the First Cause is either the divine Mind or God of Bishop Berkeley, or the energy of the natural scientists of today. In either case, the explanation of matter simply amounts to this, that it is the expression of divine Mind in the one case, or the result of energy in the other. Such a theory is not only as frankly pantheistic as that of the materialist, but becomes, on its theological side, in its efforts to account for the origin of evil, positively bewildering. It was, indeed, this very dilemma of the primitive church which gave birth to Gnosticism.

GNOSTICISM

Gnosticism itself was the outcome of that contact of the Jew and the Greek in the Asian church which led to the attempt to blend Hebrew and pagan ideals in a philosophy which would reconcile the ceremonial dogmatism of the one with the cultured skepticism of the other. This contact has been epigrammatically described by Matthew Arnold as the collision between "Culture and Anarchy," and was more comprehensively put by Paul, in his first letter to the church at Corinth, when he wrote, "For the Jews require a sign, and

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the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." The result was that there grew up within this church a school of thought which had for its object the reconciliation of what may be termed Hebrew materialism with Greek idealism. The two cardinal difficulties which led to the movement were: first, how to reconcile the creation of the material universe by an absolutely good God, with the existence of evil, and, second, how to account for the incarceration of the human spirit in matter. The one difficulty found expression in the attempt to account for the origin of evil, the other in the attempt to explain the dogma of the incarnation.

Now, the book of Genesis distinctly declares that "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good," whilst the gospel of John equally emphatically explains that "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." The conclusion is, therefore, unavoidable that, if evil is real, either it was made by God, who pronounced it very good, or else that there are two creators, and that God cannot be the First Cause. It is this original dilemma which has involved orthodox Christianity in the second dilemma of the incarnation. Oblivious of the fact that Paul writes, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God,"

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Canon Masterman has committed himself to a definition of the body as the "garment of God," whilst Canon Scott Holland, going even further than this, tells us that "the incarnation is the announcement that Spirit is the ultimate reality of matter. Matter is the expression, the organ, the body of Spirit. It is a Spiritual Creation, a Spiritual Fact. That is its glory. Spirit possesses it; inhabits it; sustains it; fulfils it; transfigures it. In seeing it you see Spirit. In understanding it, you understand Spirit. In uniting with it, you are united to Spirit. In loving it, you love Spirit." Dr. Johnson himself could not have insisted more determinedly upon the reality of matter, and Dr. Johnson, as Canon Scott Holland points out in the very preface in which these words occur, proved the reality of matter by stamping on it. It is incontrovertible, therefore, that if we accept the argument of Canon Scott Holland, Dr. Johnson stamped not merely on matter, but on Spirit, yet Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, God is Spirit.

SPIRIT AND MATTER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The distinction between matter and Spirit was drawn very clearly indeed by Jesus. "The flesh profiteth nothing" he said to the great body of his disciples at Capernaum, with the result that from that time many of them deserted him. Noth-

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ing, Ruskin once said, gives so much satisfaction to any one as to recognize in the thought of another some characteristic which enables him to ejaculate, "That is me;" and certainly nothing seems more repellent to the human mind than the law of spiritual causation with its inevitable corollary of the scientific nothingness of matter.

"This thought of human, material nothingness, which Science inculcates," Mrs. Eddy writes, on page 345 of Science and Health, "enrages the carnal mind and is the main cause of the carnal mind's antagonism." Jesus explained the matter perhaps more clearly to Nicodemus than even to the disciples at Capernaum, when the ruler came to him, in secret, in Jerusalem. There, probably on the roof top, after the manner of the country, beneath the blue Syrian night sky spangled with the stars, with the red gleam of the lights filling the square windows of the city, he laid bare the secret of nature in the words, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." By the flesh, says Westcott, the writer includes "all that belongs to the life of sensation, all that by which we are open to the physical influence of pleasure and pain," a rendering which enforces what Mrs. Eddy has written, on page 298 of Science and Health, to the effect, "Material sense expresses the belief that mind is in matter. This

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human belief, alternating between a sense of pleasure and pain, hope and fear, life and death, never reaches beyond the boundary of the mortal or the unreal." It must be perfectly plain from this that the writer of the fourth gospel is showing that Jesus separated the absolute from the relative, the real from the unreal, with an unerring spiritual insight, and so is enforcing his own distinction of those born of the flesh, and those born "not of blood [the Greek interestingly enough is, not of bloods], nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" and here the writer explains exactly how this new birth, required of Nicodemus, is to be attained. It is by learning to "believe on his name." The interest therefore centers on the question, What does this phrase mean?

A SCIENTIFIC VOCABULARY

It is a curious fact that the critics of Science and Health are falling into the very ditch out of which the critics of the fourth gospel are beginning to scramble. They talk of the mysticism of Mrs. Eddy, just as in the past it used to be the mysticism of John. This merely means that just as they described the Johannine writings as mystical, meaning something mysterious, because they were incapable of fathoming their spiritual meaning, so now, for a similar reason, an attempt is being made to dispose of Mrs.

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Eddy's teachings, on the same easy terms. The interesting part of the matter is, however, that the great scholars, who have devoted their attention to the Johannine books, are steadily arriving at the conclusion that John was so essentially a scientific writer that he actually produced a vocabulary of his own. Dr. Westcott has shown us how, by a particular use of the definite article, he separated the absolute from the relative, in the most exact way. The same great scholar, as well as Professor Deissmann, has explained how, by the use of two separate verbs, he distinguished human and spiritual love from one another; whilst Dr. Abbott tells us how carefully, by the use of several different words, he differentiated between several descriptions of sight from the mere vision of the eye to purely spiritual vision. These are but a few instances, but they are one and all instances in which Mrs. Eddy's use of the same words is now admittedly sanctioned and confirmed by the New Testament. There is nothing whatever forced or mysterious about it. It is simply a scientific use of words brought about by the necessity of elucidating the spiritual meaning of the context. In her own words, on page 115 of Science and Health, "The great difficulty is to give the right impression, when translating material terms back into the original spiritual tongue."

The critics of Science and Health, how-

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ever, like the critics of the Johannine writings, are not satisfied with this. They have indulged in the most vitriolic denunciation of Mrs. Eddy's style just as Renan poured out invective on that of John. What they have failed to notice is that both John and Mrs. Eddy were handicapped by the effort to write scientifically. No doubt, at first sight, the prose of Bolingbroke seems superior to that of Berkeley, just as that of Froude may to that of Huxley. The object of writing is, however, to express ideas with lucidity and exactness, and it is doubtful if this could have been better done than it was by Berkeley and Huxley. No doubt the superficial thinker blasphemes over the "Dialogues of Hylas and Philonous" and "The Metaphysics of Sensation," but that is only because he will not endure the mental discipline of mastering their method. Just in this way the synoptic gospels compared to the fourth gospel are plain sailing, and so the reader of Renan is puzzled by Mrs. Eddy.

BELIEF AND FAITH

All careful readers of Mrs. Eddy's books must have observed that she draws a distinction between belief and faith which in turn culminate in understanding. The writer of the fourth gospel does not use the word faith, but he uses two Greek phrases, "to believe on the name" and "to believe on him," which correspond to Mrs.

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Eddy's use of belief and faith, and which also culminate in understanding. To believe on the name simply implied a belief that Jesus was the Christ, that is an acceptance of his statement to that effect, whilst to believe on him implied a more advanced reliance on the truth of his teaching. The difference between the two phrases was noticed by Origen, who explains that believing on the name is inferior to believing on him, an explanation which has been driven home by Dr. Abbott in the remark that believing on the name "is only a preliminary stage in the upward progress of a Christian." It is to be observed then that the writer of the gospel in his exordium, speaking of the Logos, declares that "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name," but coming to describe the marriage feast at Cana he explains how, after the disciples had witnessed the demonstration of turning the water into wine, they believed on him.

The whole subject is made doubly clear in the famous eighth chapter of the gospel, where the contrast between those who believed him (*πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ*) and those who believed on him (*ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν*) is completely lost in the translation, and has been the cause of more confusion than enough. The writer is describing that marvelous scene in the Court

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of the Women, when Jesus explained the meaning of the Father, the truth of spiritual causation, to the people; and in the thirtieth verse he makes use of the expression, "As he spake these words, many believed on him (εἰς αὐτόν)." In the very next verse, however, he relates that Jesus turned to those who merely believed him (αὐτῷ), an expression closely equivalent to believing on his name, and here the translation fails to distinguish between the two phrases, and unfortunately repeats the earlier translation. What, of course, the writer meant to imply was that as Jesus taught, many of those who heard him, and who had perhaps seen his miracles, believed on him, gained that further development of belief which constitutes faith. Then that Jesus, turning to those who still merely believed him, explained that discipleship constituted something more than a mere acceptance of his statement that he was the Christ; that it constituted the daily effort to abide in Truth, or, as the translators put it, to "continue in my word." If, he said, they should succeed in doing this, understanding would follow, and they would know the truth, and the truth (the truth, ἡ ἀλήθεια, the absolute truth, as opposed to ἀλήθεια, a mere relative sense of truth) would make them free. "Mortal testimony," Mrs. Eddy writes, on page 297 of Science and Health, "can be shaken. Until belief becomes faith, and faith becomes

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spiritual understanding, human thought has little relation to the actual or divine."

The question, therefore, arises as to exactly what the term faith, as used in the Bible, means, and in what degree it differs from the mere word belief. It must be remembered at the outset of any such enquiry that Jesus was speaking essentially to the Hebrew race, and that such illustrations as he took from the literature of the past were taken from what we term the Old Testament. It is important, therefore, to discover what the idea of faith aroused in the mind of the Hebrew people would be, and it so happens that we have, in the writings of Philo, himself a Jew of the first century, and a contemporary of Jesus, the means of forming an opinion. A famous modern critic, referring to the inadequacy of the Greek language to convey the moral significance of the Hebrew verb to trust, points out that the passage in Isaiah translated in the Authorized Version, "If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established," is, more literally, "If ye be not firm, ye shall not be made firm;" whilst the passage in Chronicles, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established," is more literally, "Be firm in Jehovah, and ye shall be made firm." This is precisely what Mrs. Eddy has pointed out, on page 23 of Science and Health, where she says, "The Hebrew verb *to believe* means also *to be firm* or *to be constant.*"

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Now, that this firmness or constancy meant something much more to the Jews than that mere blind faith, to which St. Gregory referred in the saying that there was no merit in faith where human reason supplied the proof, is perfectly certain. They made use of the characters and stories of the Old Testament as symbols for the conveyance of spiritual truths, and in so doing, incurred the charge of mysticism. Thus we know, for instance, from the story of Dinah, that the action of a tribe could be, for a purpose of illustration, portrayed in the story of an individual; and so Philo works out the Jewish view of faith in just this way. Abraham, says Philo, "saw the unfixedness and unsettledness of material being when he recognized the unfaltering stability that attends true Being, to which stability he is said to have completely trusted;" and he goes on from this to explain that there is "nothing so difficult or so righteous as to anchor oneself firmly and unchangeably upon true Being alone," which, in its essence, of course, is the grasp of spiritual causation. Furthermore, he says that "the only good thing that is void of falsehood and stable is the faith toward God, or the faith toward true Being," and this faith he calls knowledge. Wherefore, he continues, Abraham "is said to have been the first to have trusted God, since he was the first to have an unaltering and stable conception how that there exists One Cause, the

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Highest, providing for the world and all things therein."

On page 579 of Science and Health, Mrs. Eddy defines Abraham as, "Fidelity; faith in the divine Life and in the eternal Principle of being. This patriarch illustrated the purpose of Love to create trust in good, and showed the life-preserving power of spiritual understanding." Faith, then, as understood by Philo and as explained by Mrs. Eddy, is the perception of spiritual causation, or, as the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews put it, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is little wonder then that Paul gave it the principal place in the armory of Christian warfare: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The word used for shield is the Greek word θυρεὸς, a great oblong shield which covered the whole body, and not the mere buckler πέλτη. Consequently, it would be difficult to express the whole idea, as shown to us in the Bible, more perfectly than has been done by Mrs. Eddy, on page 170 of Science and Health, in the sentence, "Spiritual causation is the one question to be considered, for more than all others spiritual causation relates to human progress."

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THE ALLNESS OF GOD

To the mathematician, the purely metaphysical statement that twice two is four represents a working hypothesis, and it is by accepting a working hypothesis and then proceeding by some process of induction or deduction that all the great discoveries of natural science have been arrived at. To the Christian Scientist it matters little whether the enquirer proceeds by means of induction or by means of deduction. It is no doubt simpler to accept God as the First Cause, and to proceed from that by a system of deduction to the realization of the fact that God being all and being good, there is in reality nothing but good, and evil is simply an illusion of the human senses. It is, however, just as possible to proceed by the slower process of induction, and by collecting an enormous amount of data derived from the effects of demonstrating the fact that goodness is supreme, to work backwards to the conclusion that God, good, is the only reality or power. The Bible boldly accepts the fact of the allness of God, and so of the allness of good, and from this fact the patriarchs, the prophets, and finally Jesus deduced, and so demonstrated the power of God to heal sickness and take away the sins of the world. Every metaphysical statement is beyond physical perception, and so the allness of God is summed

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up in the gospel of John in a well known verse, which has never yet been translated as it is written. "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." In the original Greek of this verse there is, however, no equivalent for son, but the word God occurs once more, so that the statement actually reads, "No man hath seen God at any time: God, only - begotten, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." It would be difficult to have more distinctly stated the fact of the allness of God in more direct language, and the whole statement agrees perfectly with the explanation of Mrs. Eddy, on page 28 of "No and Yes," when she writes: "God is infinite. He is neither a limited mind nor a limited body. God is Love; and Love is Principle, not person. What the person of the infinite is, we know not; but we are gratefully and lovingly conscious of the fatherliness of this Supreme Being." To accept God as the First Cause of all things is, consequently, absolutely Christian, and, equally absolutely, scientific. What follows is to discover whether it is possible to know God, not only as a Christian would admit it is possible to know Him, but in the scientific sense that a scientist would demand that He should be known as the First Cause and, consequently, as the Principle of all things.

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It is a maxim of many natural scientists that science relates solely to secondary causes or physical facts, whilst primary or spiritual causes are beyond the range of human speculation. Such a contention is not merely scientifically preposterous, it is untenable from a religious standpoint, inasmuch as it places a limit not only to human knowledge, but to something far more impossible to gauge—a man's spiritual perception. It is, indeed, as it is easy to show, in flagrant opposition to the teaching of the New Testament. In the epistles of Peter as well as those of Paul there is an expression translated knowledge of God (*ἐπίγνωσις τοῦ θεοῦ*), but which should of course be translated full or exact knowledge of God. It is obvious from this that the early Christians, so far from regarding an exact knowledge of spiritual truth as an impossibility, regarded it as the most natural thing in the world. This, it need not be said, is the view of the writer of the fourth gospel, who speaks throughout of "the truth" and of "truth" in a way which is completely lost in the translation. This is peculiarly noticeable in the famous scene in Pilate's judgment hall, where Jesus told the Roman that "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice," a declaration which drew from the governor the half wearied, half contemptuous, and wholly cynical demand, "What is truth?"

The truth alluded to by Jesus was something

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completely beyond the spiritual apprehension of Pilate. The Roman world, of which the governor was a typical expression, was materialistic to its dregs, and had little belief in anything outside the radius of the five senses. Juvenal's famous sentence had not yet been written, but none the less, in every act and thought, Rome echoed in advance the words, "Orandum est, ut sit mens sana in corpore sano," A healthy mind in a healthy body is a thing to be prayed for. In spite of this the underlying sense of justice in the man's mind revolted against the manifest malice of the accusers of Jesus, and it is possible to catch the ring of concentrated contempt and passion in his words, "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?"

THE CHRIST

What Jesus had done was something Pilate himself would have been incapable of appreciating. He had come fulfilling the prophecies of the prophets with respect to the spirituality of the Christ, instead of fulfilling the views of the Jewish hierarchy with respect to a temporal ruler, some greater David or more successful Judas Maccabeus. The distinction between the two goes back to the time of Abraham, back to the struggle of Moses with the people in the peninsula of

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Sinai, back to the battle of Samuel against the institution of kingship, back throughout all the efforts of the kings to materialize the monotheism of the true religion of Israel. Abraham, Philo said, had been named the Friend of God, because he was the first man to perceive that there was only one First Cause, God, and that a spiritual cause, and so Abraham became the father of the monotheism of Israel. He came out from the land of many gods, and put aside, to a large extent, the old forms of material worship in order that he and his descendants might worship in a more spiritual manner. This was Abraham's vision of the Christ, and of it Jesus himself said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." The ideal of Abraham was carried on by Isaac and by Jacob, and it was after that midnight struggle on the banks of the brook of Jabbok, during which Jacob had held fast to the angel, to his vision of the Christ, that he was named Israel, for as a prince he had prevailed. From that time forth, the descendants of Abraham were known as the children of Israel, as those who adhered to this vision of a purer and more spiritual monotheism amongst the polytheistic tribes still following the old idolatrous practices. It was the struggle of the patriarchs and the prophets to maintain this purity of worship which constituted the vital element of the Israelitish religion in the centuries

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that followed. The greatest factor, however, in maintaining it was, perhaps, the action of Samuel in establishing the schools of the prophets. Out of the schools of the prophets, in the following centuries, came those wonderful proclaimers of the truth, who, like Elisha, Elijah, and Isaiah in the moment of the glory of Judah and Israel, or like Ezekiel and Jeremiah, in the days of its fall, held fast, in face of all difficulties and all dangers, to the vision of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, seeing always what was hidden from the gross materiality of the people, "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." It was Abraham who turned aside from the worship of the zigurat, and who, for the sacrifices of Moloch, substituted the sacrifice of animals. It was Moses who bound the materiality of the people in the iron shackles of the law, and who, from the summit of Pisgah, saw the land into which his people were about to pass. It was Isaiah who in that land called on the people to put away their material offerings, and to substitute pure hearts for burnt sacrifice. It was the Baptist who called upon them to submit to the baptism of purity. It was Jesus of Nazareth who at length showed them the full vision of the Christ, and so gave the children of Israel a new name, and made it possible for Paul to write to the Galatians, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female:

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for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." To Caiaphas and to Paul the promise constituted very different things, for to Paul the promise was fulfilled in Jesus the Christ. The crime of Jesus, in the eyes of the hierarchy, was that he had shown that causation was spiritual and not material, and that the expression of this causation, foretold by the prophets and looked forward to by the people as the Messiah, was not a greater than Solomon, coming to drive the Romans from Judæa, but the healer, despised and rejected of men, in whom the vision of the Christ, dimly perceived by Abraham, and treasured by the patriarchs and prophets, was at length glowing "full orbed in spiritual understanding."

We know little of the childhood of Jesus, except that even during that childhood he was about his Father's business. When, in the gospel narratives, he steps suddenly into view, it is already as a teacher. The three short years of his ministry were devoted to the demonstration of the truth, the knowledge of which he had acquired and was acquiring. In the temptations, from whatever point of view they may be considered, he proved the nothingness of matter, and the allness of Spirit. In the first, he learned that life was God-given and God-sustained; in the second, that the salvation of humanity could not be

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wrought by any appeal to its emotions, or by a performance of acts aimed at arousing sensationalism rather than the destruction of sin; whilst in the third, he showed that the world had nothing to offer, and that the peace of God was not gained by the gratification of human ambition and power. The way to save the world, he insisted from the very first, was, in the words of Wyclif's noble translation of the gospel of Luke, "to zeue science and helthe to his puple: in to remyssioun of hir synnes." Thus, when John sent his disciples to him to ask if he was the Christ, he pointed not so much to his teaching as to his demonstration of that teaching, "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." It was not by the human mind, but through the divine Mind reflected in him that those demonstrations were wrought, and as the reflection became more and more perfect, the human Jesus gave place more and more to the Christ. He healed the sick through his knowledge of the Christ, of the absolute truth, the understanding of which he told his disciples would make the world free, and so perfect was this knowledge that as he went amongst the crowds, or along the streets lined with the sufferers who had been carried in from the country, he healed them with a word. Other disciples of his, in all

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ages, have healed the sick, with varying degrees of success. He alone, standing in the mouth of the tomb, in the garden of Bethany, could cry, "Lazarus, come forth," because he alone could say, "I knew that thou hearest me always." It was thus in his other miracles that he showed the utter nothingness of matter. Only a man who understood completely that substance was spiritual and not material could have fed the multitudes on the banks above the sea of Galilee; only a man who knew the powerlessness of evil as expressed in its material passions could have said to the waves and the winds, "Peace, be still;" only a man, in short, who had completely fathomed the mystery of material creation and the reality of spiritual causation could have come to the disciples walking on the waters, and carried the boat to the shore, to the annihilation of the theory of space. In all these demonstrations, or miracles as the world terms them, the dynamic force, if the phrase can be used, was his knowledge of the absolute Truth, that is of the Christ. Yet, the moment did not come for him to give the final expression to this knowledge, in what Mrs. Eddy has termed the crowning miracle of the crucifixion, until the night when, standing in the garden of Gethsemane he declared, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Three days later, when he walked, the risen Saviour, in the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, he

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was mistaken by the Magdalene for the gardener, nor was he known to the disciples walking to Emmaus save when their spiritual perception broke into a purer flame in the breaking of bread. The human Jesus vanishing in the Christ was imperceptible to the gross materialism of the Roman soldiers who guarded the tomb, or to the Jewish doctors of the Sanhedrim. Never after the triumphant struggle on Calvary was Jesus of Nazareth seen by any human being whose spiritual sense had not been roused into activity. Then, finally, there came a moment, on the mountain in Galilee, when he vanished even from the sight of his own disciples, bidding them, in his last words, to teach the world to observe all things he had commanded them, for the Christ would be with them alway, even unto the end of the world.

THE MIRACLES

"Jesus of Nazareth," writes Mrs. Eddy, on page 313 of Science and Health, "was the most scientific man that ever trod the globe. He plunged beneath the material surface of things, and found the spiritual cause." The gospels proclaim this fact from the first chapter of Matthew to the last chapter of John, yet the world has got so accustomed to contrasting science with revelation as to be almost alarmed when it sees the fact plainly stated, and shrinks from it as if it was blasphemy. The scientific wonders of today none

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the less appear insignificant when compared with the wonders of the gospels, and the readers of the gospels are brought face to face with the fact, either that the record is a true one, or else that the whole Christian religion is a house built upon the sand. It is only necessary to conceive for a moment what Jesus did in order to see that the miracles of modern science pale before it. He healed, instantaneously and without failure, every known disease; he raised the dead; he fed five thousand Galileans with five loaves and two fishes; he walked on the water; he stilled the tempest; he carried the ship instantaneously across the lake; he found the tribute money in the fish's mouth; and he raised himself after the crucifixion. The world, faced by this list of miracles, meets them in two ways. That part of it which is Christian describes them as the works of God, meaning Jesus, that part which is not Christian, dismisses them as myths.

Now, the standpoint that the miracles are myths is an intelligible one so far as it goes, but it is vitiated by the simple fact that those who so describe them absolutely decline to test them by the only means which give them any right to be heard on the subject. The natural scientist who says quite frankly that scientific demonstration is confined to secondary causes or physical facts, whilst primary causes or spiritual facts are in the nature of unprovable assumptions, is guilty of the

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most unscientific process of reasoning in the world, that is to say, of begging the question. If you decide that certain phenomena are ridiculous, and are palpably mythical simply because they are contrary to experience, you are not merely assuming a standpoint which cannot be logically maintained, but you are denying the whole scientific experience of humanity. It is the precise argument by which the savage of today might dispose of the aeroplane or the telephone, and if the scientific thinkers of the past had acted logically upon it, the telephone and the aeroplane would be unknown today. This was the ground taken by Huxley himself in his famous criticism of Hume's view of miracles. Hume had described a miracle as a "violation of a law of nature by an interposition of the Deity." Huxley tore the definition into shreds. To begin with, he pointed out, a violated law never had been a law; and to end with, to declare that the observation of phenomena contrary to human experience was violation of law, even if such a thing were possible, was absurd, and would mean the extinction of scientific discovery. Instead, therefore, of describing such things as miracles, or dismissing them as myths, the scientific man should regard them as unexplained phenomena, and devote himself to the attempt to elucidate the causes. When, consequently, the natural scientist dismisses spiritual phenomena as unprovable assumptions, he reduces

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himself to a rather lower intellectual plane than the fox hunting squire who demanded of Stephenson what would happen if the "Rocket" met a cow on the line.

The teaching of the unreality of matter in Christian Science constitutes, of course, an idealism completely different from the idealism of natural science or philosophy. It denies the reality not only of the material phenomena, but of the noumenon of mind attributed to it in the philosophy of Berkeley, or the noumenon of energy attributed to it in modern natural science. In order, however, to prove that it is not scientific, it is necessary to do something more than ignore it. It is necessary to accept its premises, to follow the lines laid down for its demonstration, and patiently to watch and record the effects of such a procedure.

The standpoint of the orthodox opponents of Christian Science is even more impossible. Even if Jesus were God, the argument that the miracles were only possible to him as God, will not apply, for the simple reason that in each of the first, second, and fourth gospels he distinctly declared, speaking not of himself and his immediate disciples, alone, nor of any particular time or any particular place, but, on the contrary, of his disciples in all countries and at all times, that they would be able to perform his works. The words of the gospel of John are sufficiently explicit on

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this subject to silence all argument: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." In those words, Jesus made it perfectly plain to the entire world that a claim to Christianity could be substantiated only in the proportion in which the works which he had done were demonstrated by the claimant.

THE IDEALISM OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

The idealism of Christian Science is the idealism preached by Jesus. It coincides with the idealism of the philosopher and the natural scientist in so far as it concedes that material phenomena are the subjective conditions of the mortal mind of the first, or the result of that which the second describes as energy. Beyond this, it separates itself utterly and fundamentally from these two schools, and insists that the mortal mind of the one and the energy of the other are themselves the very negations of that divine Mind or Principle, termed God, which is the First Cause of all things, and which, being itself Spirit, has produced nothing but spiritual phenomena. It does not say that the physical phenomena appreciable by the human senses represent nothing at all, but it does say that these phenomena are temporary misconceptions formed by the human senses of phenomena which are themselves spiritual and eternal. The truth, the knowledge of

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which Jesus said would make men free, has been shown not to have been the mere relative human conception of truth which Pilate confounded with it, but the absolute Truth, or that which spiritually and eternally is. No knowledge could possibly be more scientific than this, and the only excuse that the natural scientist is able to produce for describing it as unscientific is the fact that it deals with primary causes instead of secondary. Definitions of the word science are numerous enough, and the critics of Christian Science commonly define it so as to exclude any consideration of primary causes.

DEFINITION OF SCIENCE

Fortunately, however, a definition of science, though it is not, of course, a definition to which a Christian Scientist could agree, is available in the delightfully unambiguous language of Huxley. Huxley defines it as the answer a man makes to the question, What do I know? Now the miracles of Jesus fulfil this definition of the Goliath of natural science exactly, and so silence once and for all the cavilling of Mrs. Eddy's critics on their own ground. "Sneers," Mrs. Eddy writes, on page 341 of Science and Health, "at the application of the word Science to Christianity cannot prevent that from being scientific which is based on divine Principle, demonstrated according to a divine given rule, and subjected to

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proof." It has, she points out, been truly said that Christianity must be Science, and Science must be Christianity, else one or the other is false and useless. Science is undoubtedly precisely what the epistles define it as, a full or exact knowledge of God, a knowledge of absolute Truth. None the less, on the showing of Huxley himself, the miracles of Jesus were scientific, from the standpoint of natural science, inasmuch as they constituted the answer he made to the educated materialism of the scribes and Pharisees, and the ignorant materialism of "the common people" as to what he knew of God. He came over the Galilean hills and along the Jordan valley, halting in the villages and towns, on the lake shores, and in the temple courts, to preach that marvelous gospel, or good news, that the kingdom of God was at hand, that the kingdom of Heaven was in men's midst. The kingdom of God was at hand, because it was not lost beyond the Galilean clouds, the kingdom of Heaven was in men's midst, because if they could only have learned to say to the material mountains about them, Be removed, it would have been so, and where the material evidence of the physical senses had been, there would have become visible the spiritual reality to which those senses were unable to penetrate. When, however, these very material senses revolted from the spiritual truths offered to them,

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he took the scientific course of demonstrating "what he knew," telling his hearers that, if they could not believe for the words' sake, they must believe for the very works' sake. And so he healed the sick, and raised the dead, and walked upon the water, only to hear the educated materialism of the Pharisees vent itself in the malicious suggestion that he cast out devils through Beelzebub, and to hear the ignorant masses demand the life of Barabbas at the hands of Pilate. So determined were they, in the words of Mrs. Eddy, "to hold Spirit in the grasp of matter" (Science and Health, p. 28) that the man who gave his human life to free them was driven to declare that such would not believe though one rose from the dead.

LAW

That unless a man had ears to hear he would not hear though one rose from the dead, Jesus himself proved repeatedly during his ministry. In spite of his repeated works of healing, in spite of the raising of the widow's son at Nain, of Lazarus, and of the daughter of Jairus, the people blindly followed the hierarchy in demanding the crucifixion from Pilate. Because he broke away from tradition and dead ceremonies, the people to whom that tradition and those ceremonies represented religion were roused into fury. They described him as a wine bibber and a glutton, they declared that he healed the sick

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through Beelzebub, and they even insisted that he had a devil. The whole of this storm of obloquy was roused by the fact that he put aside the law of the scribes for divine law, and that he disregarded the materialism of the Pharisees and Sadducees in order to teach humanity that there was only one Cause, and that, because that Cause was God, creation was spiritual and not material. What Jesus taught the little world of Palestine in which he lived, what, with that marvelous reliance on Truth which never deserted him, he declared would remain though heaven and earth should pass away, was the reign of law; but that law was not the law of Moses, was not the law of Rome, was not the law preached by generations of natural scientists since his time. It was the law of God. This law, he stated, using the ordinary metaphorical language of the day, in the words, that there was but one Father, and so of course one cause, divine Mind. Therefore that as a thorn could not bring forth grapes, or thistles figs, so all that proceeded from that divine Mind must be spiritual and harmonious, unless divinity was inharmonious and material. The miracle was the expression of this law as made conceivable to the human senses. It was thus the demonstration of law, it was thus divinely natural, instead of being humanly supernatural. It is only necessary to refer to the text of the Greek Testament

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to make this definition clear. There are two words translated miracle in the New Testament, and neither of them has, or ever had, any supernatural significance. The first word δύναμις means simply an act of power, so remarkable as to seem wonderful, the second word σημεῖον means simply a sign or a proof. The miracles of Jesus were wonderful, as all effects produced by a not understood cause are wonderful to the human senses, and they were also a sign or proof of the truth of his teaching to those who saw them performed. "This beginning of signs," reads the Revised Version, "did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him." Nothing could be clearer from this than that it was the demonstration of the truth of his teaching which caused the disciples in the first instance to believe on him, instead of merely believing him. From that moment they began to learn to understand the truth which was to make the world free, and in learning it to be able to demonstrate it themselves.

That knowledge was handed down in the early church, and became a natural part of its religion. We know from the works of the fathers that these miracles were considered a perfectly normal part of Christianity, and Jerome himself, in making the famous translation known as the Vulgate, substituted the words *virtus* and *signum* naturally and normally for the words in the Greek text.

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Later on, for these words, he substituted the word *miraculum,* but the word *miraculum* had itself no supernatural significance, and was the common term used by the pagan thinkers to describe their scientific experiments. Meantime, the night of materialism, known as the Dark Ages, was falling upon Christendom. Only a few years after the crucifixion James, in writing the epistle in which he declared that the prayer of faith would heal the sick, had also said that faith without works, theory without practice, was dead. Already he saw the tendency of the early church to rely on preaching without the "signs following," and the word sign not only means demonstration, but in the Greek is the actual word elsewhere translated miracle in the New Testament. In the gross and deadening atmosphere of the Roman empire, the struggle of Christianity for existence was fierce. Those, in the expressive phrase of Tertullian, were "the very dog-days of persecution." By night the howls of the wild beasts broke the stillness of the Coliseum; by day, eighty thousand pitiless pagan faces watched in the arena the steadfastness of the Christians, which the philosophic Marcus Aurelius described as perversity. So long, however, as the persecution continued, Christianity was still preached with signs following, even if in an ever decreasing ratio. The determination of Cæsar to take the church under his protection

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was the final blow. In making it powerful, he condemned it to weakness, in giving it riches, he reduced it to poverty. From the time of Constantine, the warning of James might have been replaced by the warning to the church at Sardis. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."

MRS. EDDY

Sixteen centuries were to elapse before the still, small voice, proclaiming healing as an integral power of Christian life, was to be heard again. This does not mean that during all those centuries the power of God was not present to heal. Again, again, and again, men had risen who in brief moments of acute spiritual perception had brought healing to the sick, and stayed the hand of death. Such voices were, however, the voices of men crying in a wilderness of sin and suffering, which they themselves believed to be God-created. The consequence was that these miracles tended to convince men more completely that such healing was supernatural, and to confirm the world more strongly than ever in the belief of God-sent suffering and divine vengeance. The first person to break with this tradition, the first person to see the goodness of God and the divine law, not as an emotion, but as a scientific fact, was Mrs. Eddy. That was nearly half a century ago. The experience of healing

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came to Mrs. Eddy when she was at the point of death. In that experience she learned something that had been learned by the great religious figures of the past, by the patriarchs, and the prophets, and the long line of Christian workers, but she realized, in addition, something which had been hidden from these men, something which had been given to the world by Jesus and lost again, the fact, which she has expressed, on page 286 of Science and Health, in the words, "Physical causation was put aside from first to last by this original man, Jesus. He knew that the divine Principle, Love, creates and governs all that is real." To learn this Science so as to be able to help the world became the object of her life. "I knew," she writes, on page 109 of Science and Health, "the Principle of all harmonious Mind-action to be God, and that cures were produced in primitive Christian healing by holy, uplifting faith; but I must know the Science of this healing, and I won my way to absolute conclusions through divine revelation, reason, and demonstration." The moment foretold by Emerson had come, the moment, "When a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations, and see it in the light of thought, shall at the same time kindle science with the fire of the holiest affection, then will God go forth anew into creation."

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LOVE

It is this question of Love, referred to both by Mrs. Eddy and by Emerson, to which any discussion of Christian Science must ultimately come. To attempt such a discussion thoroughly would be to examine the whole of the foundations and structure of Christian Science; here it must suffice to endeavor to point out why Mrs. Eddy writes, on page 275 of Science and Health, "God is Love, and therefore He is divine Principle." The Bible makes a complete distinction between the two Greek verbs translated to love. The one φιλέω is used admittedly with a distinct human signification; the other ἀγαπάω is more difficult to define, but Diessmann, than whom there is perhaps no better authority, insists that in the bastard Greek tongue, in which the New Testament is composed, and which became gradually the colloquial language of the Mediterranean, it had a "religious-ethical meaning." Now if this is tested by the text of the New Testament, it may be easier to arrive at an idea of Diessmann's meaning. The exceptions to the use of ἀγαπάω are few, and are nearly all marked by a personal relationship. The most remarkable instance of this occurs, of course, in the famous command of Jesus to feed his sheep, when after having twice addressed Peter with the word ἀγαπάω and had been answered with φιλέω he makes his last appeal to Peter with his own word.

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Commenting on this, Westcott says, "the third time, He adopts the word which St. Peter had used, the idea of the loftiest Love is given up." Passing from this to the remarkable fourth chapter of the First Epistle of John, the word ἀγάπη will be found to be used continuously, sometimes as a synonym for God, in the expression "God is Love," and sometimes as an attribute, as in the sentence, "perfect love casteth out fear."

Now if God is Love, it is perfectly manifest that Love is the Father of all things, the First Cause of creation. It is perfectly certain that no first cause which was inharmonious or destructive ever could be creative. It is perfectly clear consequently that the power of God, which is the dynamic force, the energy of spiritual creation, must be described as Love. Even the natural scientist, determinedly limiting himself to the examination of secondary causes, admits this, when he describes the discords of physical nature as only incidents combining to produce a perfect and harmonious whole. God then is Love, "and therefore," as Mrs. Eddy writes, "He is divine Principle" (Science and Health, p. 275), for it is Principle which governs the spiritual reality, and which alone prevents the material counterfeit from scattering into a million fragments.

What greater love can a man show any one than the realization of the fact that the real man,

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the image and likeness of God, the reflection of Principle, is, as Jesus said, perfect as his Father which is in heaven. The world fears for those it loves in its human, passionate way, because it realizes that flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, because it realizes that flesh and blood can sin, suffer, and be sick. When it exchanges its human love for a scientific understanding of Love, it sees man no longer as a sinning, suffering human being, but as the image and likeness of God. In grasping something of the truth which makes men free, it has begun to fathom the mystery of spiritual causation. This is the perfect love which casts out fear, and so is Christian healing wrought. "Jesus," writes Mrs. Eddy, on page 476 of Science and Health, "beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick."

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The Christian Science Journal

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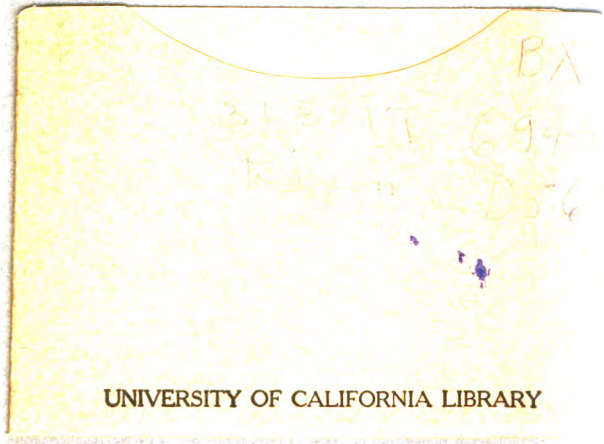
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